

# Lake Oroville Recreation Surveys Preliminary Results II

Presented to the Oroville Relicensing  
Recreation Work Group  
November 21, 2002

## Goal of Presentation

- Preview, with somewhat more detail and based on much larger samples than on 9/24/02, the results of the Oroville Visitor Survey.
- Preview Similar Recreation Sites in NoCal (on-site survey) and Household Survey (phone survey) results
- Preliminary overview of use data

## Visitor Sample Obtained To-Date

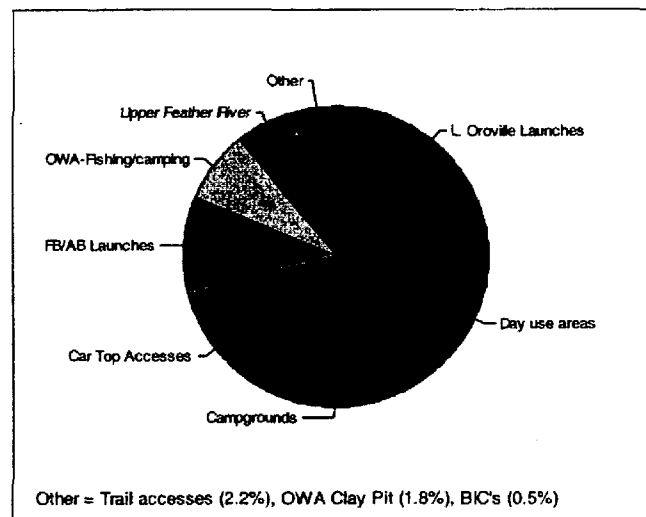
- On-Site: n=2,500 (preliminary data: n=1276)
- Mailback: n=900 (preliminary data: n=858); achieved approximately a 40% response rate
- Surveys completed at 40 recreation sites
- Top 8 locations:
 

■ North Forebay DUA	242
■ Lime Saddle Boat Launch/DUA	178
■ Loafer Creek Campground	177
■ OWA - Levee Road, West of Feather River	172
■ Bidwell Canyon Boat Launch/DUA	164
■ Monument Hill Boat Launch/DUA	149
■ Spillway Boat Launch	144
■ Riverbend Park	118

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

3

## On-Site Surveys by Type of Rec. Area



Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

4

## Where Visitors Come From, How Often & When They Visit

- Hometown:
  - Oroville=26%, Chico=9%, Yuba City=5%, Paradise=5%
  - 90+ others each with <4% of respondents
  - 95% + live in California
- Residence:
  - 66% Butte County
  - 35% non-Butte County
- Visitation Pattern:
  - 70% are "regular" visitors (3+ visits per year)
  - 55% visit in Spring, 89% in Summer, 41% in Fall, 29% in Winter

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

5

## Visitors' Group Size, Day-Use vs. Overnight Visitors

- Group Size and Makeup
  - Mean of 3.8 adults and 2.3 children
  - Total group size averaged about 6
- Overnight Visitors:
  - 34% of visitors stayed at least one night
  - Of those who stayed overnight, 60% stayed in a drive-in campground, 19% in "other" accommodation (e.g., relative or friend's home), 9% on a houseboat, 3% in a motel, 3% in a boat-in camp

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

6

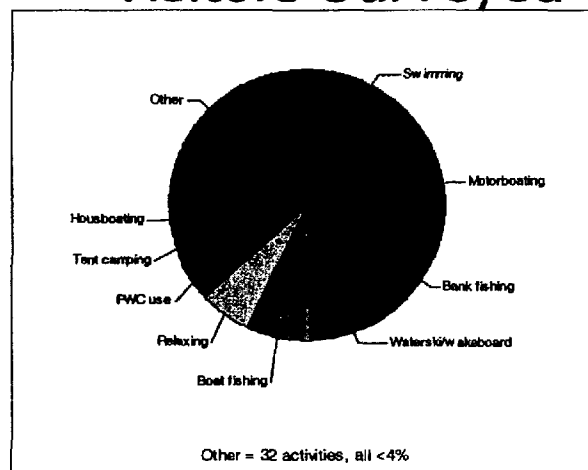
## Primary Activity of Visitors Surveyed

■ Swimming	14%
■ Motorboating	12%
■ Fishing from bank	10%
■ Waterskiing/wakeboarding	9%
■ Relaxing/Picnicking	8%
■ Fishing from boat	7%
■ Tent camping	4%
■ PWC use	4%
■ Houseboating	3%
■ Hiking	2%

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

7

## Primary Activity of Visitors Surveyed



Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

8

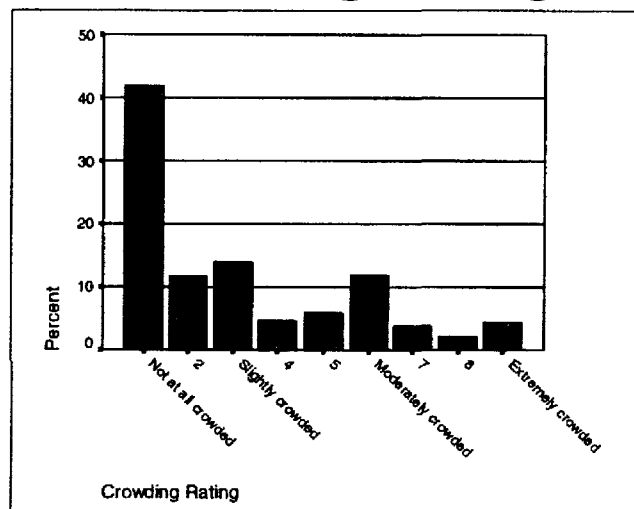
## Perceptions of Crowding and of Scenic Quality

- Recreation Site crowding rating:
  - 1= "not at all crowded", 3 = "slightly crowded"
  - Mean of 3.1/9.0
  - 67% gave rating of 1, 2, or 3
- Scenery rating:
  - 6.0 = "appealing", 9 = "extremely appealing"
  - Mean of 6.3/9.0
  - 65% gave rating of 5, 6, or 7
  - 74% rated scenery "appealing" or above

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

9

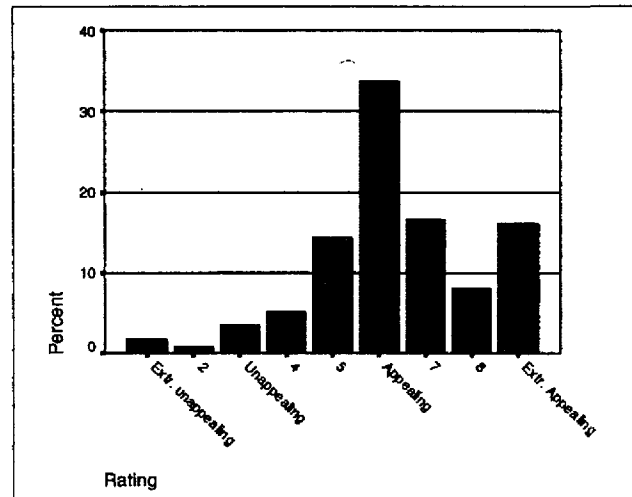
## Crowding Rating



Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

10

## Scenery Quality Rating



Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

11

## New Recreation Activities/ Special Events Desired

- "Were there any recreation activities or special events not offered in the Lake Oroville Area that you would like to do?"
- 19% gave at least one response
- Half of responses were NOT new activities, e.g.:
  - improvements to existing facilities, access, or regulations to facilitate activities
  - activities currently available in the Oroville Area (but that may not be available at the survey location)
- Top requests among the valid responses:
  - Beach/swim areas (mentioned by 27% of respondents with valid responses)
  - Non-powered boat rentals, waterside camping, parasailing, athletic competitions (each mentioned by 5-7% of respondents with valid responses)

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

12

## Perceptions of Management, Water Conditions, and User Interactions

- Top issues considered to be a "Big Problem"
  - Exposed land during low water 25% [15%]
  - Water level fluctuation 22% [17%]
  - Shallow areas during low water 20% [17%]
  - Access to shoreline 13% [10%]
  - All others (21 items) 10% or less

[#%] = no opinion/not sure/does not apply

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

13

## Perceptions of Number of Facilities

- 27 facilities/services listed on survey
- Evaluated as "too few", "about right", or "too many"
- For most items, <15% responded "too few"
- For 4 items, >25% responded "too few"
  - Developed DUAs along shore 34% [40%]
  - Restrooms 33% [17%]
  - Swim areas 31% [37%]
  - Docks or temporary moorage 28% [44%]

[#%] = no opinion/not sure/does not apply

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

14

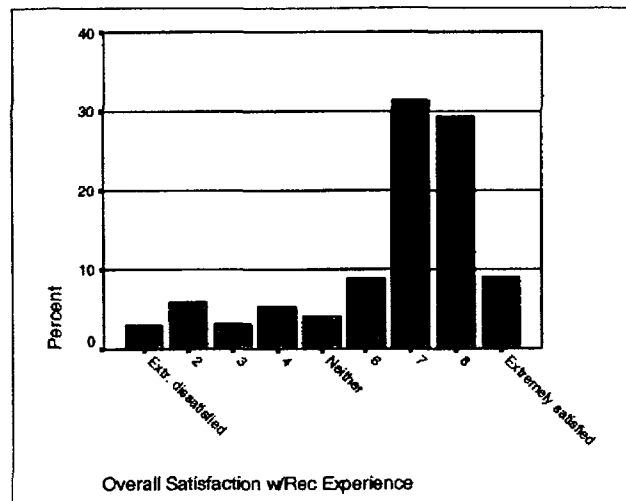
## Overall Satisfaction with Recreation Experience at Lake Oroville Area

- Mean = 6.6/9.0 (6 = "somewhat satisfied", 7 = "satisfied")
- "Dissatisfied" to "Extremely Dissatisfied" (1, 2, or 3) = 12%
- "Satisfied" to "Extremely Satisfied" (7, 8 or 9) = 70%

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

15

## Overall Satisfaction



Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

16



## Selected Data from Boating Section

- 834/1279 (65%) completed section
- On-water crowding rating: 3.1/9.0 ("slightly crowded")
- Have to wait to launch = 28% (most said wait is 5 or 10 minutes)
- Satisfied with boating experience = 89%
- Why not satisfied?:
  - Low water, Low water, Low water
  - Launch ramp improvements needed

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

17

## Negative Boating Encounters

- Had encounters that put self at risk = 8.6%
  - "Boats getting too close"
  - "Boater cut us off while they were skiing"
  - "Jet skiers don't give a \*!#@ about anyone, not paying attention"
- Observed activity that put others at risk = 8.2%
  - "3 kids on jet skis driving erratically"
  - "Fast in no-wake zones"
  - "People not watching where they are going"

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

18

## Selected Data from Fishing Section

- Fished at Lake Oroville Area before = 60%
- Fished in area from 1 to >100+ days in past 12 months (but 77% fished 5 days or less)
- Fished with a guide = 7%
- Fished in a tournament = 4%
- Crowding in fishing area = 3.1/9.0
- Feel knowledgeable about regulations = 83%
- Feel regs allow a quality experience = 90%

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

19

## Satisfaction with Fishing Experience

- Satisfied = "Yes" (75%)
- Why not satisfied?
  - "Didn't catch any", "Got skunked" (surprise!)
  - Lake/river flow too low
  - Fish too small
  - Litter

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

20

## Selected Data from Trail Use Section

- 715 of 1279 completed trail use section (56%)
- Includes users of N. Forebay loop, OWA fishermen; will probably eliminate some respondents in later analyses
- Primary type of trail use:
  - Hike/walk 71%
  - Bike 15%
  - Horse 10%
  - Multiple/Other 4%
- Repeat Users of trails = 51%
- Crowding on trails = 2.0/9.0 (3 = "slightly crowded")

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

21

## Negative Encounters on Trails

- Reported encounter(s) that put them at risk = 5.5%
- 21% with bikers, 15% with equestrians, 23% with hikers, 33% with others
- Example encounter descriptions
  - "Bikers came down hill fast and had no concern for the horses"
  - "Joggers with dogs unleashed"
  - "The horse trails – they'll run you off them"
  - "Sharp rocks and naked chicks" (???!!!!)

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

22

## Perception of Condition of Trails

- Satisfied with condition of trails = 90%
- Why not satisfied?
  - Frequently cited distance to lake
  - Lack of handicap accessibility
  - Natural hazards – snakes, poison oak
  - Litter, dog and horse waste

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

23

## Next Steps in Recreation Survey Efforts

- Analyze complete summer visitor survey data (nearly all of mailback survey data and more than half of on-site data entered)
- Review sampling goals and success for activity groups
- Enter data from hunter surveys (have completed about 60-70 on-site since mid-October)
- What else?

Presentation to Recreation WG -  
11/21/02

24